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101 Critical Days of Summer are upon us

by Senior Master Sgt. Michael Andrzejewski, 171st Safety Office

You know you had a bad summer if your answer to, "How did you spend your summer vacation?" includes the word "hospital" or "emergency room."

Memorial Day weekend marked the official start of the 101 Critical Days of Summer, which runs through Labor Day. Historically during this period all branches of the military experience a surge in mishaps, especially off-duty mishaps.

With the arrival of warm weather comes: vacations, sports, swimming, cookouts, home repair projects and the increased use of alcohol.

Some leading causes of summer mishaps are car and motorcycle accidents, many of which can involve alcohol, excessive speeding or the lack of wearing seatbelts or helmets.

A person committing an unsafe act potentially puts family members and bystanders in harm's way. Aside from the legal consequences, consider how it would feel to live with the thought that you cost a bystander or a loved one their life or caused them serious injury.

Some ways to help prevent a mishap this summer:

- Avoid the use alcohol if you will be operating a car, motorcycle or other power equipment.

Avoid riding in a car or boat if the operator has been drinking.

- Wear a seatbelt at all times, regardless of how far you are going. Insist your passengers all wear seatbelts and remind others to wear them even when you are not the driver. In an accident, an unbelted person can become a projectile, and injure or kill others.

- If operating a motorcycle, wear a helmet. Make sure to be noticeable, wear brightly-colored clothing in the daylight and reflective clothing at night. Also, make sure your headlight is lit at all times.

- While driving, keep your full attention on the road. Avoid distractions, such as using a cell phone or texting while driving. If you must talk on a cell phone, use a hands-free device. Signal your turns in advance to allow the person behind you to react.

- Never use gasoline to start a charcoal grill or campfire and open the lid before lighting a gas grill. Don't add lighter fluid to a grill that has been lit, the flames can travel back to the can and cause serious injuries.

- When swimming in a river, use extreme caution. Some areas may have strong undertows which can pull even the strongest swimmer under water.



- Never leave children unattended near a swimming pool, pond, lake or river.

- If on a boat, make sure there is a life preserver for every passenger and wear it. Do this, especially if you're a weak swimmer.

- When going on a long trip, be well-rested before starting. Also, stop frequently or switch drivers to avoid fatigue. If you are fighting to stay awake while driving, find a motel. If you need to, pull over to a safe area, lock your doors and take a nap.

- Before beginning a sporting activity or exercise, stretch and remember to hydrate.

Don't think "It won't happen to me." Many people involved in accidents probably thought the same thing.

Safety first, analyze the risk

by Brig. Gen. Roy Uptegraff, 171st Air Refueling Wing Commander

"There but for the grace of God go I." That quote comes from a 16th century imprisoned theologian upon seeing a group of prisoners being led to their execution.

Yesterday, I used that same expression upon seeing a young airman with his arm in a sling on his way to the clinic. An injury that gets my attention.

Evidently, the young man was out very late and on his way home from a date. He nodded off for a moment. The telephone pole that totaled his car and broke his collar bone woke him up.

There but for the grace of God go all of us. Sometimes there is just not enough time in a day to do it all, but we still try to do it all. Unfortunately, we can get so exhausted, drained of energy when we might need it the most. Fatigue is a killer.

The Federal Aviation Administration is studying several high-profile cases of pilot fatigue and distractions that are probably more embarrassing than dangerous. Several regional jet airline pilots have been caught attempting take-offs with only one engine operating. The causal factors for this appear to be distraction and fatigue.

One crew was so convinced the engine must have quit, they taxied back to the gate only to have the mechanics report the embarrassing (and license-suspending) truth. "Ah, Captain, the exhaust pipe is not even warm."

We are surrounded by more and more distractions. Cell phones, iPods, Netbooks and probably other distracting devices are going to hurt some of us. We are all guilty of operating these things while driving. On my way to a Family Support conference at Penn State, we got into a single-lane road-work traffic. Traffic ran even slower due to a late-model Lincoln that plowed into the back of a trailer truck. Why do you think he did that? There were no skid marks. My money says he was moving forward but wasn't looking out the windshield.

Our cars are like cocoons. We have metal, music, and air conditioning embracing us and something else too – anonymity. Be careful fellow airmen. In some foolish circles, that car's cocoon-like interior is the breeding ground for road rage. You have all seen it or been part of it. Please be aware, your cocoon is not bullet proof or above the law. Draw from your professional courtesy, training and character to always stay beyond attack.

Now that I have set the stage above, the point I am really closing on is this, safety. We have lost one terrific airman this summer due to a very tragic accident. I don't want to ever lose another. Put safety ahead of everything else. Think about what would happen to your family if you were seriously injured. Analyze the risk. Every one of you is vital to our nation's defense and a treasure to your family and community now, and even more so in the future. We have numerous accidents off-base and very few on-base or on deployment. Before you begin to do something - stop, think, collect yourself and then do it with care.

Enjoy the summer, but play it safe. To those of you who have deployed this year – thank you for bringing the pride and accomplishment home. You are awesome!

Commander's CORNER



Updating TRICARE and DEERS

Are you deploying or have been waiting to have your early TRICARE updated in DEERS or have you volunteered for an active duty tour and need the active duty condition added to DEERS? There is a new way that you, the member, can get your DEERS record updated.

Each unit member is required to have a vPC-GR (virtual Personnel Center-Guard and Reserve) account; this is where you will make your request for update to early TRICARE and/or active duty orders in DEERS. If you don't already have a vPC-GR account established, follow the steps below to create one:

1. Log into AF portal
2. On left hand side of screen under Personnel/Finance scroll

down and select vPC-GR

3. Scroll down to bottom of screen where it says "If you do not have an account, select New Account"

4. Follow the prompts to create a new account

**Prior to requesting an update to your early TRICARE/active duty order/TA-180 through vPC-GR, you will need to check your civilian employment information by checking your CEI, through the SteelWeb. This checks that your information has not already been updated in DEERS, since the process can take two weeks.*

If you have questions about this process please contact Tech. Sgt. Jessica Craiger 412-776-7411, 171st Force Support Squadron. More detailed steps on the process are also on the SteelWeb.

"Editorial Staff"



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Farewell to a fellow airman

by Chief Master Sgt. Vic Guerra, 171st Air Refueling Wing Command Chief

We lost one of our own recently, Senior Airman Keith Farmerie, an aircraft mechanic with the 171st Maintenance Group. He was the son of Master Sgt. John Farmerie Jr., also an aircraft mechanic here. He was 29 years old, leaving behind a wife and two small children. He died May 29 in a tragic accident while working on a truck in the family's business.

At the funeral, one could see that Keith had a large family that also included his 171st Air Refueling Wing family. More than 50 current and retired unit members attended the funeral, and appeared as a virtual "sea of blue."

Many other unit members had also paid their respects the day before. The funeral was co-officiated by our own Chaplain, Lt. Col. John Fitzgerald (Father Jack as he's affectionately known) along with Pastor Overly from Keith's church.

Keith was buried with military honors, along with a combined Honor Guard team consisting of 171st ARW members and the 911th Airlift Wing members. It was a very touching and memorable ceremony. There was sadness for the passing of a son, husband, father, friend and comrade. But also pride in honoring his memory, his love for his family and his service to his country.

I wish those of you who couldn't be there could have witnessed and felt the reverence of this heartwarming ceremony. The Honor Guard did a fantastic job, and I know the Farmerie family appreciated their service. The Base Honor Guard should be complimented for their service. Without them, ceremonies like this wouldn't be possible.

Keith's family greatly appreciates the help, support and compassion our unit has expressed throughout this ordeal. From phone calls, including some from our deployed members, to sympathy cards, to contributions to a trust fund for Keith's children, the condolences, comfort and generosity shown has been wonderful. I would like to personally thank several unit members who have gone above and beyond in helping the Farmerie family through this very difficult time; Deborah Krall, wing family program coordinator, Tech. Sgt. Lonnie Olson and Chaplain Maj. Jonathan Bell. These individuals were with Keith's family almost on a continuous basis. They helped them with their needs such as, running errands, making sure they ate and just being there to listen. I hope you know just how much that meant to the Farmerie's. You are all great Wingmen!

Please keep the Farmerie family in your thoughts and prayers since it will be a long time before their lives are anywhere near normal again. For those who know the Farmerie family, please check on them from time to time, be a good Wingman. Look out for your fellow airmen as well. One doesn't need to be a close family member to be affected by a tragedy such as this. As we say farewell to a fellow airman, keep Keith's family in your prayers.



HIGH

Aircraft: 59-1467
Hours Flown: 226.3
Sorties Flown: 34

Crew chiefs: Pat Gallagher, Dave Skrtich, Michelle Campbell,
Dustin Mara, Allen Augustine and Nathaniel Lieberum

Flyer

Briefs FYI

171 ARW Education Fair during July UTA

The 2010-2011 school year starts in August. If you've been thinking about furthering your education, there will be several local colleges and universities outside the Aerospace Dining Hall Sunday, July 11 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Stop by after lunch and get some information on what they can offer.

171 CAMS hosts another reunion luncheon

All former members of the 171st CAMS are invited to another luncheon Aug. 7, noon at Hoss' Steak House in Moon Township. If interested call Henry Lach 412-897-6165 Ron Hoenig 724-650-2832/rmhoenig8@yahoo.com or Ray Dougherty 724-695-8238/doughduv@verizon.net.



Military Appreciation Day is back again! The event is scheduled for Sat., Sep. 25, noon to 8:00 p.m. exclusively for military members and their families. Tickets are \$14 per person and must be purchased in advanced. Contact your first sergeant or Public Affairs at 412-776-7350.

Estimated pay date for the
July UTA:

July 19

Estimated pay date for the
July SUTA:

July 28

HAITI

ANSWERING THE CALL ON DUTY AND OFF DUTY

Whether they are called upon by government officials or voluntarily helping a neighbor, guard members can't sit by and watch, guardsmen always find their way to a disaster.

When a catastrophic earthquake hit our neighbors to the south in Haiti, two members of the 171st Air Refueling Wing offered their help serving in different capacities: one was on duty and the other was not.

Tech. Sgt. Jerry Scurlock is a traditional guardsman with the 258th Air Traffic Control Squadron in Johnstown, Pa. He served with the 260th ATCS of Pease, New Hampshire because they needed more airmen for the operation.

Leaving for Haiti on a C-130 at the end of January, Scurlock wasn't sure what to expect once he was there, but expected to be busy and operate in severe conditions.

"In my 20-plus years of aviation experience, I have never seen that kind of traffic," Scurlock said. The controllers used a 1970s camper converted into a control tower donated by the Federal Aviation Association because the earthquake destroyed the previous tower.

The team incorporated the control tower with the existing non-radar equipment that was used before the earthquake. According to Scurlock, military controllers are required to learn how to use the non-radar equipment in their training, but civilian airports in the U.S. haven't used it since the 1930s. Working 12-hour days, seven days a

By Tech. Sgt. Stacy Gault, 171st Public Affairs week, Scurlock dealt with all types of aircraft.

"We had everything from the big 474 landing down to the open-cockpit tail dragger," he said.

The controllers lived in the same conditions the Haitians had. Tight-quartered tents, MRE's and one shower tent for 1,000 people made for rough living conditions, but Scurlock said the sacrifice was worth the opportunity to help hundreds of thousands of people.

Another unit member saw an opportunity as a civilian to help the Haitians and jumped at the chance. Lt. Col. Bryan O'Neill, 147th Air Refueling Squadron, accompanied a group of friends who chartered an airplane to volunteer and deliver medical supplies donated by local companies. O'Neill served as a "military translator" for the group by working with the active duty military at the airport since he understood military terms and procedures.

"Here was a group of guys from Sewickley who got together and said 'we want to do something for Haiti and literally pulled their resources and people from different specialties, put them all together and did something good,'" O'Neill said.

In their first trip, O'Neill's group took a group of doctors and nurses to Haiti to volunteer their services in the aftermath. On the return flight, 102 orphans adopted by American families boarded the plane and flew to the U.S. O'Neill enjoyed spending time with the orphans and the feeling was mutual.

"One little boy looked up at me and asked if

I would be his daddy," O'Neill said, "I would have taken him home in a second but I reassured him that he had another daddy waiting for him."

Leaving thousands of pounds of supplies in Pittsburgh that wouldn't fit on the first trip, the group took a second trip where they delivered \$15 million of medicine, which O'Neill said would be enough for three years of surgeries in the whole country.

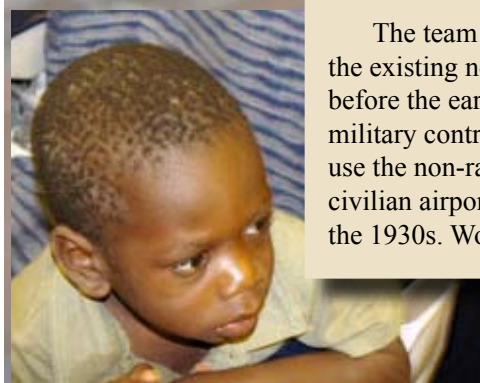
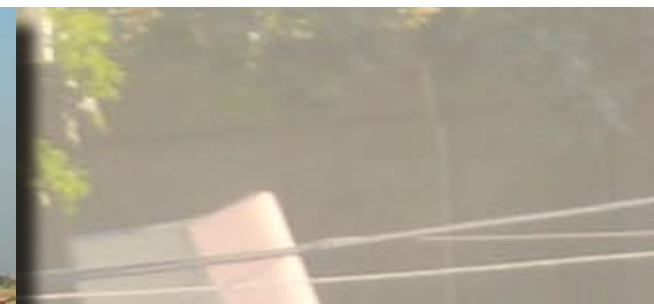
Volunteer agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives agency guarded the morphine and other drugs on the plane. The medicine was then passed on to a team of doctors accompanied by Marine Rifle Teams for delivery to four different hospitals in Port au Prince. This ensured the narcotics made it to the patients that needed them.

They also used the second trip as an opportunity to give a ride home to 40 Americans and a rescue dog named Smokey who were helping in the earthquake disaster.

Though both Scurlock and O'Neill had very different experiences, they both came away with a similar observation. Haitians are very giving to others.

O'Neill observed the orphans sharing their meals with each other during the flight home. He said for kids, who are normally starving and get so little food, to offer it up to someone else was heartwarming to see.

"The Haitian people are surprisingly generous with what little they have. They don't have much, but what they do have they are glad to share," Scurlock said.



Photos courtesy of Army Spc. Jesse Jean, Tech. Sgt. Jerry Scurlock and Mr. Cliff Benson

New PT standards are here!

by 1st Lt. Christopher Preffer, 171st Public Affairs

Thrust your arms to the point of malfunction. Develop an excruciating pain in your abdominal region. Then push yourself to scurry a length equivalent to runway 2-8 left, a distance you customarily travel by airplane.

Are you doing all this because you want to look good in the sporty Air Force physical training uniform? Are you doing this because you just love to congregate with the rest of your Air Force comrades around the base, wear shorts reminiscent of the 80's Dolphin shorts, and participate in some old fashioned 'PT'? Definitely not true.

You do this because it's that time of year to participate in your Air Force annual physical training test at the 171st Air Refueling Wing. July 1, the Air Force PT test, which received a facelift, takes effect and Air Force members now partake twice a year.

There are members who say, "I never had to run a mile and a half in combat, and the enemy doesn't care how big my waist is. Why does the Air Force hold us accountable in these areas?"

Though many of our Air Force brothers and sisters have never been required to run even a half mile in combat, the intention of revising the fitness program was to design a science-based test that incorporates health-based standards across all fitness components. Consensus among fitness experts indicates that we can adequately gauge a member's fitness with a 1.5-mile run, according to the Air Force Fitness Program Frequently Asked Questions website.

"Getting rid of the step-test as an alternative test was a great idea," said Master Sgt. Kim Rose, the 171st Air Refueling Wing's Wing Fitness Program Manager. "Measuring the VO2 max (volume of oxygen consumed during exercise) during the walking test provides a more accurate fitness assessment" than the step-test does.

Another standard complaint about the physical fitness test is that Air Force members are required to test twice a year. This is a huge logistical problem for Air National Guard members.

All Title 10 members are mandated to complete an official fitness assessment.

This assessment is done minimally twice yearly, as written in paragraph 2.11 of AFI 36-2905.



June 2010 drill marks the end of a PT standard. New stricter standards begin July 1. Staff Sgt. Chris Bowser performs the sit up portion of the PT test. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Master Sgt. Stacey Barkey)

However, in that same paragraph, Air National Guard members under Title 32 are mandated to complete an official fitness assessment at a minimum of once yearly.

Members must be tested by the last day of the month, 12 calendar months following the previous test (e.g., if a member tested on April 15, 2010, the member must retest on/before April 30, 2011).

It's been printed that 1-in-4 is projected to fail the new PT test. This 25 percent failure rate is based on numbers collected from the major commands.

Each command submitted the scores from 100 randomly selected airmen to Air Force headquarters, where officials calculated how the airmen would fare under the new standards.

"During the past year (June 2009 to May 2010) 1,159 171st members took the test," said Rose. "Of those, 31 failed."

Prior to public affairs I was a math teacher, and 31 of 1,159 is nowhere close to 25 percent. It's two percent for those of you searching for a calculator.

The term GI came about during World War II; referring to military equipment as Government Issue. In other words, Government Issue is government property.

In a sense we are Government Issue and should hold our bodies to the same high performance and physical conditions we have for our equipment. Every service member knows that keeping their equipment in peak condition is essential for mission success.

"When we deploy we are out on the fringe," said Brig. Gen. Roy E. Uptegraff, commander, 171st Air Refueling Wing. "We lose sleep and are bombarded with stressful situations. Fitness is our weapon and our ability to perform."

"The more fit your body, the more your brain can perform," said Uptegraff. "Thus, when you are at the edge, looking at those around you who are lacking sleep and dealing with stress, do you want to wonder if they are thinking clearly while your life is in their hands? Do you want them to question the same about you?"

Physical fitness is an essential way of life for military members and should be accomplished more often than twice a year.

Next time you're walking your dog, take an extra lap around the neighborhood. Or take a trip to the base fitness center and utilize the amazing equipment we recently acquired. Remember that fitness is a life-long journey. It's not about being fit to pass a test, rather fit-to-fight. Get fit-to-fight!



Staff Sgt. Nick Sobol, 171st Security Force Squadron had one of the fastest times at 9:29 during the fitness test Sun., June 6. (U.S. Air Force photo by 1st Lt. Christopher Preffer)

You have just entered the ...

RECRUITER ZONE

Our Recruiting Team -- (412) 776-7495

Master Sgts. Sue Smith and Skip Powell, Tech. Sgt. John Frazier, Staff Sgts. Shayla Pollard and Lindsey Duncan and Airman 1st Class Lisa Weiss
Contact us toll free at 1-877-249-5193 or through the web www.171arw.ang.af.mil



Become an Equal Opportunity Specialist

The 171st Equal Opportunity Office is now looking for a traditional Equal Opportunity Specialist.

This position promotes an environment where individuals are treated with dignity and worth regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. Equal Opportunity Specialists provide advice, consultation, education, mediation, and referral services by using interviews, surveys, and other techniques to provide information and guidance on preventing or eliminating conditions which negatively impact mission effectiveness.

For entry into this specialty you must have prior qualification in any AFSC at the 5-skill level or higher and be in the grade of E-5 or above, have an Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery or Armed Forces Classification Test score of 41 or higher in administrative or 44 or higher in general. You must also have the ability to speak distinctly and communicate well with others and have no record of disciplinary action.

To be considered for an interview, please e-mail Capt. Michael Hajjar, no later than July 7, at hajjar1@msn.com, an interview will be scheduled during the July drill weekend. Please bring a resume and the interview will be held in the EO office located downstairs in the headquarters building.

Pennsylvania National Guard 2010 Scholarship Awards

The scholarship board of directors plans to grant scholarships to any member of Pennsylvania Army and Air National Guard or to a child of a guard member who died or was permanently disabled while on National Guard duty, for the purpose of pursuing higher education.

There are student categories for the scholarship awards program.

Category I are those individuals entering an institution of higher education as a full-time (12 credit hours) student for the first time.

Category II are those individuals presently attending college or vocational school as a full-time (12 credit hours) student (graduate students are not eligible for this program).

The applicants receiving the three highest ratings will each be awarded a \$1,000 scholarship. The fourth and fifth highest will receive a \$500 grant. The next (number to be determined by the board of directors) highest rated submissions will each receive a \$400 scholarship. The grants are provided through the generosity of the Pennsylvania National Guard Associations, the 28th Infantry Division Association, USAA, and individual contributors.

The deadline to apply for the scholarships is extended to July 15, and the military rank of the applicant or the child's family member is not part of the selection process.

Additional information can be obtained from the SteelWeb. If you have any other questions and need to get and applications forms, contact Master Sgt. Donald Schauer, 171st Retention Office at 412-776-7471 or donald.schauer@ang.af.mil.

Congratulations



Joseph J. Liberati
Mark A. Wilson



Adrienne Muto
Joseph R. Braner
Kristi M. Fritz
Andrew R. Madden
Ashley L. Leighton
Frank J. Taracido
Morgan L. McCoy
Shane A. Rishel



Daniel R. Eichler
Eric G. Schaefer

Welcome to the 171st ARW!

Samuel Luther
Ariana Whitehair
Patrick Jones
Charles Wiley

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This month's information is short, but we did want to first recognize our recent retirees who are: Lt. Col. Lori Painter, Senior Master Sgt. Jimmie Lane, Master Sgt. David Yessel, Master Sgt. Sharon Fairchild, Master Sgt. Shane Endres and Staff Sgt. Jose Tunon. Congratulations, and if you need any assistance please contact George Manown via phone or e-mail at our office.

Any of you who served with the 171st CAM squadron, please contact Chief Master Sgt. William Schempp who is compiling a list of those unit members.

Lastly, as a reminder our luncheon is still scheduled for July 19, 11 a.m. at Hoss' Steak House, Beaver Grade Rd., Coraopolis.

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Where have all our Tankers gone?

by Col. Mark Van Kooten, 171st Maintenance Group Commander

This is the question of the month! An uninformed eye might mistake the above picture as perhaps a single-flying squadron or even a “rainbowed” unit. However, we all know this ramp to be the home of the 16 finest KC-135 aircraft in the Air Force. The hub of maintenance activities normally on the flightline has slowed to a crawl. The hangars are empty except for a refurbished F-102. In fact, you can even get a parking spot in front of the hangars after 6:30 a.m. on weekdays. So what happened?

Well it all started in January when we began sending our aircraft to Programmed Depot Maintenance, where they receive an extensive overhaul. This maintenance activity occurs every five years and is scheduled to take 180 days per jet. But we have had aircraft that enjoyed the depot so much they stayed for almost a year. We currently have four aircraft in depot maintenance.

At the end of April, we sent aircraft to the area of responsibility to fulfill our Air Expeditionary Force commitment. Along with personnel, they are enjoying the sun, sand and working some very long days. In the first month, they set a 171st Air Refueling Wing record for the most flying time accomplished on our aircraft of 1,562.2 hours. The next closest month was May 1999 which occurred during Kosovo operations. So far they have off-loaded nearly five million gallons of JP-8 to numerous different types of receivers. This pace is expected to continue throughout the month of June.

The accompanying ramp photo was taken in the middle of our first swap-out. We sent some people and aircraft over to relieve some of our deployers; those who went for the first

month only. That leaves us with the current picture to support our local flying commitments. It doesn't leave much room for having any aircraft with maintenance issues.

You'll notice one different tail on the ramp. Our good neighbors at Rickenbacker in Ohio loaned us an aircraft to help us make it through the AEF with the swap-outs and the simultaneous deployment to Pacific Command, PACOM. They are helping us support dual-theatre operations set thousands of miles apart.

All of this leaves us with plenty of room on the ramp considering we used to park 21 KC-135E back in the day before converting to the “T” model.

The current deployment is going well and we are poised and ready for the second half of our AEF commitment. Our folks continue to impress the active duty with our attitudes; knowledge and willingness to go the extra yard for mission success. They are operating with safety in the forefront.

(U.S. Air Force illustration by Tech. Sgt. Shawn Monk)

Orientation Flight schedule for 2010

August 5 (evening)	Educator Flight
August 19 (evening)	Employer Flight
September 23	Spouse Flight
October 14	Clergy Flight
November 12	Veterans Flight

To submit an individual for one of the flights above, please email the following information to Public Affairs, 171.arw.pa@ang.af.mil : First and Last name, Title, SSN, Phone number, Email address, Sponsor name, Emergency contact and phone number.